

CULTIVATION AS NECESSARY AS FERTILIZATION

The more fertilizer or manure we put on our fileds—within reason, of course the more things grow. Including the more things grow. Including weeds, Nature is very impartial in the eistribution of her sub-soil favors. She seems just as willing to fester weeds as grains; just as ready to feed, their greedy, little suckers as the rootiets of useful plants. She seems quite as well satisfied with a ground-matting crop of pusicy as with a basket-filling one of onlons or corn.

Semetimes I think she's fonder of weeds than of vegetables. You know it often happens that the worst scape-grace in the family is "mother's boy," actually loved more tenderly than his accepting brothers. There's a good deal of the externally inexplicable femining about Old Lady Nature.

I notice that she doesn't produce cab-bages nor polatoes nor lettuce nor as-paragus on my gardens, unless I fix the soil up very comingly and fertilize it very generously and cultivate it very laboriously, and generally monkey with inboriously, and generally monkey with it, day in and day out. Even then she fren treats these friends of mine quite coldly and as if she didn't half like em. But let her alone and she'll cover those gardens with pigweed and pussey and shepherd's purse and a score of other weeds that are of no yes to man or beast. She'll pur her whole heart into that sort of thing, and will do a job that plain'ty outclasses almost anything we can cajole her into doing with our erops.

(Written Specially for The Bulletin.) of asparagus starts up in my onlon
The tiliage question ranks in farm
importance next to the manure problem.

of asparagus starts up in my onlon
bed in another garden, I yank it out,
instanter. Ie's a mighty useful plant
where it belongs; it's a pesky weed among my onions.

The point is, that when you work hard to get a patch of ground ready, for com, say—when you manure it and plow it and harrow it and mask it and hill-dros it and plant it and crowstring it and pay taxes on it, you want returns for what you've done in corn—not in quackgrass nor in pigweed nor in anything else in the whole vegetable kingdom. It's corn you're working for. Yet, before you planted your corn, mature had filled that soil full of about forty-seven kinds of weed-seed. And the minute you've finishel your day's work and gone to supper, she sets herself to stealing as much as she can of your manure, etc., and steering it into something else than your crop. Go out there when the corn your crop. Go out there when the corn first pricks through the surface and get down on your hands and knees. get down on your hands and knees and squint over that ground, and you'll find that there are just about forty-seven other things up beside the corn. Leave the patch alone all summer, and it'll yield you about us big a crop of each one of these forty-seven weeds as of that corn. of that corn. Then is the time you have to get out your cultivator.

The things you don't want are just as ready to absorb the value of your soil preparation and just as hungry for your manure as the plants you do your manure as the plants you do
want. Let 'em alone and they'il take
their full share—with a few spoonfuls
over to insure good measure. As most
of us find that we can't well do but one And the more manure we put upon or thing at a time, so most soils can't

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MI...... Town...... County.....

Enters the competition to grow an acre of corn according to the plans set forth in The Bulletin's announcement on Jan. 1st, 1912, the prizes being \$100 to first; \$50 to second; \$25 each to third and fourth; and \$10 each to three others; and suject to all the rules and requirements

of the contest

her blamed weeds—if we'll let her.

That's where cultivation comes in. Not that the only nor even the most important function of tiliage is weed destruction; there is another service in cultivation which is daily being proved still more important. I mean the mulching and lightening and aeration of the soil. But—as Kipling used to say—that's another story. There's full opportunity for a whole chapter about the value of tiliage in keeping to get for the sake of tiliage. Think only at this time of the need of destroying weeds—of keeping them from robbing your crop of the food you've furnished for its exclusive use.

In pioneer days there was a saying long the frontier that the only good along the frontier that the only good injun was a dead injun.

I never was much acquainted with

the abortismes and am not qualified to debate that saving. But I'll make affi-davit, if need be, to the fact that the only good weed is a dead weed.

Every decent New England house keeper hates dirt. But what is dirt? Just matter out of place. Sawdust in the [cebouse isn't "dirt." it's the esmential thing for keeping ice and is worth more than yards of plane cov-trg would be. But sawdist in the par-lor on the plane is "dirt," because it doesn't belong there.

Similarly a weed is just a plant out of place. It may very well be that every plant which grows has a purpose all its own. This doesn't mean, in the old rural saying, that every plant is for some human use, if we only knew what. It's just a little hit cheeky for us men and women to assume that the only use in the universe for anything is a use we may be able to make of it. We aren't the whole thing, however important we may seem to ourselves. But, practically considered, when we are trying to raise a certain plant the use of which we can make serve us, any other plant which comes up and tries to jostic our protege out of its bed is a weed.

have to fuse with it day in and day out, and year in and year out, to make it to its bost. But when a stray shout

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our soils for the sake of helping produce more than one crop at a time.

Swipe a blg three-quarters of it to feed her blamed weeds—if we'll let her.

produce more than one crop at a time.

It must be either a crop of plants or a crop of weeds. Is can't often be both.

And it's up to Mr. Parson

sends you to get out the old cultiva-tor, first thing. But how shall you use it? How often shall you use it? Shall you depend on it alone? Are you going to let the horse do it all, or are you going to let the horse do it all, or are you going to use your own fingers—and brains, to polish up the job? In these latter days, I find that a good many farmers rely wholly upon

te horse and the cultivator-teeth. They "go over" their corn once, or twice, at the most, leave the cultivator at the end of the last row, turn out the torse and say: "Let her go at that;

Two years ago there died in Missouri a farmer who was in the habit of raising about a million bushels of corn every year on about 18,600 acres of land. If ever there was a man who might be thought to have too much land in corn to work it thoroughly, it used in corn to work it thereughly, it was this chap. I've just been reading over his own account of the way in which he used to handle his 18,000 acres. The thing that impressed me most forcibly, in the whole story, was his way of cultivating. He was careful to get good seed, of course. He was particular about playing and master. particular about plowing and manur-ing-also of course. But it was after all this preliminary preparation had been completed and his cern planted that his real work of making a good crop developed. He harrowed his 18-000 acres thoroughly before the corn ever came up; always once and usu-ally twice. Then he began cultivating as soon as he could even if he had to ave something like plaster dropped a intervals to show where the rows were, lie cultivated as often and as thor-oughly as possible. Never less than four or five times, oftener if we can, corn should be gone over with cultiafor at least once a week.

Then, when the corn got well up. along in late July or early August, "go through the fields and pull out by hand every weed that was loft."

Sometimes this Missouri farmer raissedinary commercial measurement, you understand; not to be compared with arefully dried and accurately weighed orn in a competition. He expected an accuracy of about 15 bushels to the acrefron all his fields and every year. He was so careful about saving every bit if needless labor expenses that he had special two row cufficators built for medical two row cufficators built for the saving every his and heavy seed a special two row cufficators with the had special two row cufficators with the saving every his and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows are special two rows and heavy special two rows are special two rows and heavy seed a special two rows are special two rows and heavy special two rows are sp special two row collivators built for him, extra big and heavy, each requir-ing three mules to draw is. During the growing season he had over a hun-dred of these tools all the time at work. He chose them because they enabled fewer men to do the work and he wanted to save all the wage outgo he could.

Yet he found it worth his while, anxfor he found it warth his while, any-lous as he was to avoid all unneces-sary labor cost, to send his man through his 18,000 acre fields and pull, by hand, the weeds which the cultiva-

I'm talking this now, because it seems a good time for you to figure out the way you'l treat that acre of corn which I hope you're planning to plant watch I hope you're planning to plant in The Builetin's corn context. This farmer out in Missouri—Dayld Rankin was his name, and he was worth nearly 14,090,000 when he died, almost every red cent of it made from raising corn and feeding it to steem and hogs—this Missouri farmer wasn't trying to make a record or win a prize. He was stamply doing over farming in the way receive prompt attention.

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